

**MONTANA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 511 Choteau, MT 59422

*"Envisioning healthy people in healthy communities throughout Montana"*

January 29, 2007

Hon. Dan Weinberg, Chair  
Public Health, Welfare and Safety Committee Members  
Committee Members  
State of Montana Senate  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Senator Weinberg and Public Health, Welfare and Safety Committee Members,


The Montana Public Health Association (MPHA) would like to thank you for considering Senate Bill 142 in committee, and we express our wholehearted support for passage of the Montana Public Health Emergency Act. We appreciate Senator Greg Lind for sponsoring this legislation, and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services for requesting the measure, in collaboration with numerous state, local and Tribal emergency response partners.

MPHA encourages passage of this Act. It would facilitate important cooperation and collaboration among local and state agencies during a public health emergency, and define the parameters of a public health emergency and how response integrates into "all hazard" disaster response plans. SB 142 passage would help ensure that Montana's public health system is prepared to respond to a public health emergency that exceeds local response capabilities or is likely to significantly impact another jurisdiction.

The Montana Public Health Association (MPHA) is a diverse membership of individuals and organizations advocating for optimal public health best practice standards for all Montanans. MPHA facilitates educational and professional growth opportunities, networking and mentoring, and collaborative relationships for members and partners. MPHA joins with other organizations on specific issues to strengthen the voice of public health and advance legislation to support the people of Montana.

Again, thank you for considering SB 142 in committee. Our organization looks forward to working with you on this and other important public health initiatives in the future. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lora Wier, MPHA Past President, MPHA Advocacy Committee Chair, at (406) 466-2562 or [health@3rivers.net](mailto:health@3rivers.net), or visit the MPHA website at [www.mtpha.com](http://www.mtpha.com)

Sincerely,

  
Terri Hocking  
President

Cc: Senator Greg Lind  
Montana DPHHS



Governor Brian Schweitzer

**Montana**  
**Department of Labor and Industry**  
**Business Standards Division**

BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

January 19, 2007

Jane Smilie  
Administrator  
Public Health and Safety Division  
1400 Broadway Rm B102  
PO Box 202951  
Helena MT 59620-2951

Re: SB 142, The Public Health Emergency Act

Dear Ms. Smilie:

The Montana Board of Medical Examiners takes this opportunity to express its support for the Department of Public Health and Human Service's proposed bill, "The Public Health Emergency Act".

With this legislation, the Department's Public Health and Safety Division has taken an important step in addressing increasing needs for emergency preparedness. The bill requires public health emergency plans with provisions for necessary powers and duties in emergencies. The Board of Medical Examiners supports the requisite licensure recognition or registration of out-of-state volunteer health care providers, including public health professionals, and associated immunities afforded volunteers.

The Board of Medical Examiners appreciates your coming to its meeting of December 2006 to explain the purpose of the bill and to seek feedback from a stakeholder in matters pertaining to the health, safety and welfare of Montana's.

Sincerely,

//S//

Micheal Lapan, DPM  
President

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"AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER"



Governor Brian Schweitzer

*Montana*

**Department of Labor and Industry**

**Business Standards Division**

January 18, 2007

Jane Smilie  
Administrator  
Public Health and Safety Division  
1400 Broadway, Rm B102  
PO Box 202951  
Helena, MT 59620-2951

Re: SB 142, The Public Health Emergency Act

Dear Ms. Smilie:

The Montana Board of Nursing takes this opportunity to express its support for the Department of Public Health and Human Service's proposed bill, "The Public Health Emergency Act".

With this legislation, the Department's Public Health and Safety Division has taken an important step in addressing increasing needs for emergency preparedness. The bill requires public health emergency plans with provisions for necessary powers and duties in emergencies. The Board of Nursing supports the requisite licensure recognition or registration of out-of-state volunteer health care providers, including public health professionals, and associated immunities afforded volunteers.

Being proactive now in this important arena of public health law will pay future dividends to the public as ever-changing threats to public health and safety present themselves. The Department's vigilance is to be commended.

The Board of Nursing appreciates your coming to its meeting of October 2006 to explain the purpose of the bill and to seek feedback from a stakeholder in matters pertaining to the health, safety and welfare of Montanans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Raph MN, RN".

Susan Raph, MN, RN, CNAA, BC  
President, Montana Board of Nursing

## RESOLUTION 2006-36

### PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTE MODERNIZATION PROJECT

It is the intent of the Montana Association of Counties to support the modernization of Montana's Public Health Statutes.

**WHEREAS**, Montana's public health statutes are outdated and in need of updating to reflect current public health practice; and

**WHEREAS**, Over the last several years, Montana public health, medical and legal professionals, as well as policy makers have thoroughly reviewed and analyzed Montana's public health statutes and determined key areas in need of updating. These include the following:

- **A basic purpose statement for the public health system** -- There is no specific reference in Title 50 of the Montana Code Annotated to the critical role and essential functions of the public health system in protecting and promoting the health of Montanans.
- **Major public health powers of state and local public health agencies** -- Much of the language that describes the major public health powers of state and local agencies is outdated and vague and may not support current public health actions when implemented.
- **Defined standards for conditions of public health importance** -- Montana statutes and administrative rules focus on communicable disease control and sanitation, however, there is no general guidance for addressing diseases or conditions of current and future public health importance.
- **Public health emergencies** -- Specific powers and authorities of state and local public health agencies in a public health emergency need to be delineated. Additional issues, such as the ability to utilize health professionals that are not licensed or credentialed in the state during an emergency, should also be examined.; and

**WHEREAS**, two pieces of legislation will be introduced in the 2007 Montana Legislature. One will revise basic public health powers and authorities, the other public health emergency planning and response; and

**WHEREAS**, it is a goal of the Montana Association of Counties to promote a strong public health system that assures the necessary programs, services and protections to keep our citizens Healthy.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Montana Association of Counties supports the modernization of Montana's Public Health Statutes.

**SPONSOR:** Health & Human Services & Labor Committee

**RECOMMENDATION:** Do Pass

**PRIORITY:** High

**REFERRED TO:** Health, Human Services & Labor Committee

**ADOPTED:** Annual Conference, Bozeman, MT  
September 27, 2006